

## EXHIBIT D

# What a Difference a Decade Makes

## A Comparison of Prime Time Sex, Language, and Violence in 1989 and '99

### I. Introduction

#### Why Televised Sex, Foul Language, and Violence Matter

At the beginning of the last century, television was nonexistent. At the dawn of the new century, television is the most pervasive and powerful medium in America by any measure - it is almost impossible to imagine American society today without television. With a television set in over 98 percent of American households,<sup>1</sup> TV saturates American society almost completely. In 1989, around 65 percent of households had two or more televisions. Today, more than 75 percent of homes have more than one.<sup>2</sup> These multiple-set households average 2.89 television sets,<sup>3</sup> meaning that there are over 235 million televisions in American homes - one for nearly every viewer. Moreover, more than 48 percent of households have a set in a child's bedroom.

These millions of televisions are not idle. In 1998, the latest year for which figures are available from Nielsen Media Research, the average household watched 7 hours, 15 minutes of television daily. Women spent four and a half hours in front of a set and men nearly four hours a day.<sup>4</sup> Teens and children averaged three hours a day. Adults spend more time with television than with any other medium,<sup>5</sup> and almost as much as with all other media combined.

It is no wonder, then, that advertisers have voted with hard currency to make television the number-one ad medium. **This kind of access to the minds and emotions of Americans was worth \$47.5 billion dollars to advertisers in 1998**, because of television's demonstrated power to influence perceptions, attitudes, individual behaviors, and even national and world events.

Television images are tremendously influential, especially among impressionable youth. Teens, with their disposable income, and searching to find acceptance and develop an identity outside their own families, are especially susceptible to media influence, making them one of the most targeted television advertising demographics of the late 1990s.

One of the most researched ways that television influences children is by increasing their propensity to violence. "[A] review of almost 1,000 studies, presented to the American College of Forensic Psychiatry in 1998, found that all but 18 demonstrated that screen violence leads to real violence, and 12 of those 18 were funded by the television industry.

In 1992, the American Psychological Association concluded that 40 years of research on the link between TV violence and real-life violence has been ignored, stating that the 'scientific debate is over' and calling for federal policy to protect society."<sup>6</sup>

Though less research has been conducted on the effect of other offensive television content on other behavior, there is substantial evidence that sexuality and language are also significantly affected by media portrayals. Professional organizations like the American Academy of Pediatrics have drawn links between television's depictions of sexuality and real-life behaviors.<sup>7</sup> A 1995 poll of children 10 to 16 years of age showed that children recognize that "what they see on television encourages them to take part in sexual activity too soon, to show disrespect for their parents, [and] to lie and to engage in aggressive behavior."<sup>8</sup> More than two-thirds said they are influenced by television; 77 percent said TV shows too much sex before marriage and 62 percent said sex on television and in movies influences their peers to have sexual relations when they are too young. Two-thirds also cited certain programs featuring dysfunctional families as encouraging disrespect toward parents.<sup>9</sup>

The issue of broadcast networks' declining standards over the past decade matters despite the networks' dwindling audience. The Big Three broadcast networks (ABC, CBS, and NBC) still command over one third (35.7 percent) of the viewing audience. More important, however, is the fact that broadcast television sets the baseline standard for the entire entertainment industry. Movies, cable, music CDs, the Internet, and videos and video games, while sometimes rated, must be sought out and purchased, and do not have any inherent content restrictions. Broadcasting standards stem from the fact that broadcast television (along with radio) is universally available. In addition, broadcasters use the public airwaves, and therefore have a legal obligation to serve the public interest.

Broadcast television no longer serves a broad public interest, and in many cases is not even suitable for viewing by a broad public audience. **What a Difference a Decade Makes: A Comparison of Prime Time Sex, Language, and Violence in 1989 and '99** quantifies the increase in sex and coarse language on prime time from 1989 to '99. Beyond that, this report reviews the character of sexual allusions, foul language, and violence that appear on television during the study periods in each of those years. Using subcategories of a variety of sexual behaviors still considered objectionable by many parents, for example, the report concludes that the depictions of sex on television today are markedly different than were those of a decade ago.

## II. Background and Methods

Many considered the prime time of 1989 inordinately sexual. In that year, for example, Detroit-area housewife Terry Rakolta made headlines with her protests to the sponsors of Fox's *Married...With Children*, which, while it may have been the smuttiest series of its day, was far from the only one that routinely contained racy innuendo.

An April '89 *Boston Globe* story stated that "the...deploring of language, nudity and those 'sexual situations' on the three major networks [is] being heard again, much as it

was during the 'jiggle' era of a decade ago." (In that era, of course, ABC's *Soap* and *Three's Company* raised hackles with their risqué-for-their-time plot lines.)

According to the *Globe* story, even though "today the networks pay only lip service to the notion of the 'family hour' [8 to 9 p.m. Eastern]...programming indeed tends to change as the evening progresses. Tune in at 9 for silly double-entendres, at 10 for heavy breathing."

The viewers of '89, it turned out, hadn't seen anything yet. By the mid-'90s, even casual observers must have noticed that not only sexual material (including more than occasional heavy breathing and an avalanche of double- and single-entendre) but also foul language were becoming increasingly prevalent, not only at 10 and 9 o'clock but also at 8, as networks began to schedule libidinous shows like *Melrose Place*, *Friends*, and *The Nanny* in the first hour of prime time. The family audience was left with few options in the "family hour."

Even *People* magazine recently has been prompted to ask, "Faced with nightly sex, violence and a smut glut, parents, critics - even kids - wonder: Just how low can television go?"

Concern over raunchy content airing in time slots traditionally set aside for family programming was one of the factors that led to the formation of the Parents Television Council in 1995. The PTC has conducted several studies of sex, coarse language, and violence in prime time, and usually found significant increases therein from one report to the next.

The time is right for an extensive exploration of how prime time changed in the past decade, in those terms. This study, then, compares and contrasts programming from the first four weeks of the 1989-1990 and 1999-2000 television seasons. (The exact parameters are September 18 through October 15, 1989, and September 20 through October 17, 1999.)

For the sex category, analysts entered into a database both visual acts (scenes involving amorous couples) and, much more often, verbal content (suggestive comments or jokes; references or allusions to, but not depictions of, specific sexual acts).

Moreover, the PTC established, for the first time in a study, subcategories for six types of sexual references: oral sex; pornography; masturbation; so-called kinky practices, such as phone sex, group sex, and bondage; homosexuality; and genitalia. This was done in large part because of analysts' sense that this material, more daring than the coital references and allusions common since the '70s, became more prevalent in the '90s, and the PTC wanted to quantify that perception.

For foul language, the PTC, also for the first time, counted the so-called milder curse words like "damn" and "hell," mostly because of analysts' recollection that stronger language seldom was used on prime time in the late '80s, and, as a result, figured - correctly, it turned out - that those words would make up the bulk of what we found for

'89. Additionally, we also, as is our custom, logged coarser terms such as "ass," "bitch," "bastard," and worse.

For violence, we entered portrayals, descriptions, and threats, and included the effects of violence (e.g., bodies of people violently killed, or wounds received as a result of violence).

We also looked at subcategories of violence. Categories include violence perpetrated by clearly unsympathetic characters who are identified as unsavory or evil (e.g., characters who can be identified as serial killers, thugs, henchmen, drug smugglers, etc. Incidents included in this category would only be acts initiated against individuals unable to defend themselves - scenes of mutual violence between "good" and "bad" characters were not counted). Other categories look at whether a violent scene depicted blood, involved sex, a firearm, or showed bodies or a death (ambiguous scenes where someone was shot and fell, but may not have died, were excluded). Finally, we looked for scenes involving sadism or torture, whether they involved occult violence (kicking and punching vampires would not be counted; killing one by driving a stake through its heart would) and whether a scene or allusion was extremely graphic (very bloody, dismemberment, slow-motion death, etc.).

Though this analysis does rely, to some degree, on subjective judgment, the same analysts applied the same criteria to both study periods.

### **III. Overview and Results**

#### **Highlights:**

- In terms of sexual and violent material and coarse language combined, the per-hour rate almost tripled from '89 to '99.
- On a per-hour basis, sexual content more than tripled from '89 to '99.
- Overall, material in the sexual subcategories was more than seven times as frequent in '99. The most dramatic increase therein was in homosexual references, which were more than twenty-four times as common.
- Foul language was more than five and a half times as frequent in '99, and the curse words used were, as a group, far harsher in '99 than in '89.
- The rate of violent content was almost the same in both years.

- Though still rare in absolute terms, instances where sex was mixed with violence or was graphically depicted went up significantly in percentage terms.
- One show - UPN's *WWF Smackdown!* - was responsible for more than 11 percent of all the combined sex, cursing, and violence in '99.

**For a detailed statistical breakdown, see Section VI.**

## **Sex**

The overall number of sexual references per hour during prime time went up by over 300%.

### **Examples of sexual dialogue: 1989 v. 1999**

#### **1989**

Two women, at the beach, checking out men:

"I give that guy a solid seven."

"Speaking of solid, red Speedos at two o'clock."

"That is definitely [an] eight. Four for each bun." (*Who's the Boss?*, ABC)

"Jeannine Stewart gives. Sex, Doogie, tomorrow night, after the dance."

"You said the same thing about Susie Berlutti last year."

"Hey, Susie Berlutti was in the bag. If I hadn't puked on her shoe, it would have happened." (*Doogie Howser, M.D.*, ABC)

"What was that line of yours? That great line of yours? 'Life is possibility, not predictability.' That got you laid a lot, as I recall."  
(*thirtysomething*, ABC)

A woman says, "Husbands are wonderful if they're not your own. They're grateful for the slightest bit of attention, they're horny as all get out, and their spirits are already broken."  
(*Married... With Children*, Fox)

#### **1999**

Susan introduces herself to a male colleague, who says, "Oh, yeah, you're the one bangin' the boss."

Susan: "Actually, when I got the job, I wasn't banging the boss."

Vicki, another colleague: "First, she was bangin' the [boss's] brother..." (*Suddenly Susan*, NBC)

"Where were they during World War II when I got wounded?"

"What do you mean, wounded? You had crabs."

"Yeah, yeah, but French crabs, they were huge... You should have seen my crotch. It was like a tide pool." (*Action*, Fox)

"Well, I'm proud of you. You had [sex with a model]. That is like regular sex with ten girls." (*Becker*, CBS)

The Solomons play a board game called Sex or Consequences. Dick reads from the box: "The naughty, bawdy, adult party game where everybody wants to be on top." When Sally quits the game, Dick asks Tommy (a teen-aged boy), "Would you please move her little metal buttocks back five spaces?" Tommy says, "Excuse me. Sally is the tongue. I am the buttocks." (*3rd Rock from the Sun*, NBC)

Dawson, a teenage boy: "What are you suggesting?"

Eve, a teenage girl: "Only the obvious. A night of scorching-hot, unbridled, mind-altering sex."

"Just like that? No first date, no months of getting to know each other?"

"Those are small-town rituals for small-town girls. Face it, Dawson, we're hot for each other." (*Dawson's Creek*, WB)

Joey gives a potential female roommate a word-association test. When he says "doggy," she says "kitten," which disappoints him, since apparently he wanted her to say "style." (*Friends*, NBC)

### **Sexual Subcategories: The More Bizarre the Better**

Material in each of the sexual subcategories identified by the PTC increased significantly. References to oral sex went from zero in '89 to 20 in '99. Otherwise, the largest increase was in homosexual references; for every one in '89 there were 24.1 in '99. As for the other subcategories, for every '89 reference there were, in '99, 7.1 references to genitalia; 6.5 to masturbation; 3.5 to kinky practices; and 3.1 to oral sex.

Those increases parallel a non-quantifiable but nonetheless real change: the sexual references of '99 were, as a group, more graphic than those of '89. This envelope-pushing, which went on throughout the decade, even caught the attention of George Will, no one's idea of a couch potato. In a 1996 column, Will denounced a typically sex-driven episode of *Friends* in which Rachel, during foreplay with her boyfriend, Ross, rolled onto a damp spot (actually caused by spilled juice) and momentarily thought Ross had ejaculated prematurely.

Sexual content on prime time is raunchier than it was when Will wrote that column. This past fall, for example, the very first scene of the season premiere of Fox's *Ally McBeal* featured the title character having sexual intercourse with a total stranger. Also this fall, two shows, NBC's *Just Shoot Me* and UPN's *The Strip*, have used the term "hand jobs."

The occasional '89 series (notably ABC's thirtysomething) broke ground as far as erotic material was concerned. The point, however, is that such a show wouldn't stand out in today's prime time climate of sexual frankness.

Finally, a numerical note: A sexual reference can appear in more than one subcategory. For example, the reference noted below (from the short-lived Fox series *Action*) to "gay porno" counts as one reference in terms of the overall numbers but is entered, for obvious reasons, in both the pornography and the homosexual subcategories.

## SUBCATEGORIES

Number of References	1989	1999	Rate of Increase*
<b>Sexual content subcategories</b>			<b>(Per hour of programming)</b>
Oral	0	20	-
Pornography	7	28	300%
Masturbation	2	17	700%
Kinky	13	60	357%
Homosexual	4	125	2,650%
Genital	10	92	650%
<b>TOTAL for all subcategories</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>342</b>	

\* Rate of increase based on 180.5 hours of 1989 programming and 235.5 hours of 1999 programming

## Examples of Oral Sex References

### 1989 - 0 references

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### 1999 - 20 references

In a spoof of a DeBeers commercial, a man presents a woman with a diamond. She kisses him, then appears to kneel in front of him. The spot cuts to a card reading, "Diamonds. She'll pretty much have to." (*Family Guy*, Fox)

In a restaurant, a woman drops her fork and reaches down to get it. Her date says, "I thought for a second there you were gonna pull a Monica Lewinsky." (*Cold Feet*, NBC)

Randy and Dennis watch a couple have sex in the building across the street. Randy says, "That man's got some serious stamina. Remind me to check out what he eats in the morning." After Randy and Dennis tilt their heads sideways, Dennis remarks, "I believe that answers your question." (*Shasta McNasty*, UPN)

After Henry puts a canine toy in his girlfriend's mouth to stop her from talking, she removes it and says, "I swear, I am not putting another thing in my mouth for a week." Ian sarcastically says, "Have a nice night, Henry." (*Stark Raving Mad*, NBC)

## Examples of Pornography References

### 1989 - 7 references

"I just want to know why men like those magazines. I mean, why do they want to look at a bunch of women who they don't even know?"

"Well, Becky, they actually believe those women are looking back at them." (*Roseanne*, ABC)

#### **1999 - 28 references**

"I wrote all my early movies."

"Action comedies?"

"Gay porno." (*Action*, Fox)

One teenage boy asks, "What kind of Penthouse Forum fantasy were you hoping for when you decided to parade your new girlfriend around in front of your old one?"

Another responds, "She wasn't my old girlfriend, and stop stealing my magazines." (*Odd Man Out*, ABC)

Norm says his dog "won't mate. I tried everything. I even got him doggy porn."

"Where do you get doggy porn?"

"Believe me, you don't want to meet these guys." (*Norm*, ABC)

"I cannot stop thinking of those female cops. It reminds me of this porno, 'NYPD Blue.'"

"That's a TV show, you freak."

"No, 'NYPD B-L-E-W.'" (*Ryan Caulfield*, Fox)

### **Examples of Masturbation References**

#### **1989 - 2 references**

A man tells a well-known singer, "I hope this won't embarrass you, but you were my first sexual experience... Don't worry, you weren't there." (*My Boyfriend's Back*, NBC movie)

#### **1999 - 17 references**

"I have Bobbi right in the palm of my hand."

"Well, that'd be a change of pace for the palm of your hand." (*For Your Love*, WB)

"He watches VH1 all day and gratifies himself. Whitney Houston, Madonna, Jennifer Lopez." (*Snoops*, ABC)

A suspect tells police that a certain model's "underwear ads were primo monkey-spank fuel."

(*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, NBC)

### **Examples of Kinky References**

#### **1989 - 13 references**

"She took her underwear and wrapped it around my wrists... she pulled me back and sat on my chest... Then she pulled down my pants and she started playing with me." (*The Preppie Murder*, ABC movie)

#### **1999 - 60 references**

"There's one thing I don't like about dating Siamese twins... People just stare at you, and



you can tell their sick minds are just trying to compute all the sordid, sexually perverted possibilities." (*It's Like, You Know*, ABC)

"Get on the Internet and find out what you can about these crush clubs. People getting sexually aroused by stepping on bugs..." (*The Practice*, ABC)

"Did you know that necrophilia is not only with dead people?... Supposedly, some famous actor out in Hollywood, he hires hookers to lie in an ice bath [and] waits till they turn blue with the cold before diving in."  
(*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, NBC)

Charlie and Kirsten overhear the couple next door having sex again.

Kirsten: "I think there's more than two of them in there. How else could they keep up that pace?"

Charlie: "The beds in this place, they're built stronger than that... How do they get the bedposts to flex like that to make all that noise?"

"I don't know. Maybe, I mean, if there's something tied to the posts, or someone."

"What made you think of that?"

"It was something that I tried, once or twice... It was just something that this one guy was into." (*Party of Five*, Fox)

A pimp character offers a wrestler his "choice of any one of these fine hos [whores] for the whole night." The wrestler says, "I don't do hos... You got any farm animals? No, no, no, hey, don't look at me like I'm a freak. They're not alive." (*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

"So what happened to Gordon?"

"I wanted a threesome and he freaked." (*Love and Money*, CBS)

## **Examples of Homosexual References**

### **1989 - 4 references**

### **1999 - 125 references**

"Let me ask you something. Anybody ever take your pants off you [whom] you didn't wind up spending the night with?"

A gay character: "My tailor... no, wait." (*Spin City*, ABC)

Karen tells Jack, a gay man staying at her place, that her husband "sleepwalks, so if you bump into him in the middle of the night and he puts the moves on you, just go with it. You might get a mink in the morning." (*Will & Grace*, NBC)

A gay couple, arguing:

"New condoms? What's wrong with our regular brand of condoms?"

"Nothing. These were on sale, that's all."

"You cheap gay bastard! These things are gonna fly right off!" (*Mission Hill*, WB)

"The foundation for any friendship between a man and a woman is based on his wanting to sleep with her, unless he's gay. Then it's shopping." (*Ally*, Fox)

"Don't you ever sweat, or is that a gay thing?"

"Yes, Norris, that's a gay thing. We gays like to save our sweating for the gay sex." (*Oh Grow Up*, ABC)

A closeted action-movie star tells a film executive that he wants to be open about his sexual orientation: "My life is a living hell. The shame, the hiding. I want to be able to walk down the street with my man and say to the world... 'This is the man that I share my bed with.'" (*Action*, Fox)

Bart parades by the principal's office in a pep-squad outfit, including a sweater and skirt. Principal: "He's gotten into the pep closet."

Homer: "I'd say he's coming out of the pep closet." (*The Simpsons*, Fox)

A cop asks a man if another man had been "your lover." The man answers, "He was my husband." (*Third Watch*, NBC)

Russell, a gay soap star terrified of being outed, has a one-nighter with a man who later rebukes him: "You've obviously mistaken me for a closeted, dysfunctional, socially unenlightened, confused, unevolved homosexual. That would be you." (*Wasteland*, ABC)

Road Dogg pulls Mankind's arm between his legs, then goes behind him and simulates anal sex.  
(*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

## **Examples of Genital References**

### **1989 - 10 references**

A bomb destroys quarters used by a prostitute. Someone jokes that the woman's client deserves a Purple Heart for surviving the explosion. Someone else responds, "I'm sure there must be a more appropriate organ." (*China Beach*, ABC)

### **1999 - 92 references**

Nina learns that Elliott, a co-worker, is suffering from impotence. She hands him a bottle and says, "Apply this to Elliott, Jr. three times a day." (*Just Shoot Me*, NBC)

"He has a really big heart."

"You know what they say, you only get one really big organ." (*Norm*, ABC)

Male cops banter about their guns. A female cop asks them, "What happens next? You guys unzip, I get a tape measure?"

"You won't need much more than a keyholder for Bosco."

Bosco: "Yardstick." (*Third Watch*, NBC)

"She may be taking my popcorn, but she knows there is more in my lap than that." (*That '70s Show*, Fox)

Drew pulls his girlfriend, a handywoman, aside and asks her to explain a matchbook, hotel key, and condom in her possession. She responds, "I am fixing a restaurant which is in a hotel."

"And the condom?"

"I thought you'd want to put it on your penis when you thank me for the big-screen TV." (*The Drew Carey Show*, ABC)

Announcer Jerry Lawler, discussing the athleticism of a wrestler named Val Venis, whose ring persona is that of a porn star, says, "If you don't believe me, just ask some of the ladies he's starred in films with. They love every inch of Val." (*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

Jesse interrupts her boyfriend Kurt's date with another woman. She tells the woman she's Kurt's sponsor from a group for sexual compulsives, then says to him, "You're just going to...have sex with her all night long, and in the morning you're going to leave her...Kurt, you've got to take the power away from your penis." (*Wasteland*, ABC)

Carmen e-mails a friend about what happened during preparations for a high-school play: "Miss Ross made Sam[antha] sit on Josh Ford's lap at rehearsal this morning. And JF sprung a major pup tent." (*Popular*, WB)

## Foul Language

The language used on network television has changed dramatically. The overall use of profane language has skyrocketed over 500 percent since 1989.

In 1989, "hell" (56 uses) and "damn" (52) were easily the most commonly used curse words, making up more than two-thirds (67.9 percent) of the total. In 1999, though each was used far more often ("hell" 298 times; "damn" 220), together they constituted under half (44.2 percent) of the total.

The use of "shit" on CBS's *Chicago Hope* was a sensational, extreme example of a widespread trend. "Ass," used only 12 times in '89, was the second most frequently used word in '99 (265 times). "Bitch" went from two uses to 60; "son of a bitch" from twelve to 54; "bastard" from fifteen to 43; "crap" from five to 41; "sucks" from zero to 40; and various obscured and euphemistic forms of "f\*\*k" from one to twenty-nine. (There were about 30 percent more program hours in '99 than in '89, but the percentage increase in the use of each of these words easily exceeds that figure.)

When a word was bleeped or otherwise inaudible but nonetheless understandable (usually through lip-reading) it was counted as if it had been audible. When it could not be determined what word was used, it was counted as [bleep].

Finally, though UPN's *WWF Smackdown!* contained plenty of sexual references and (of course) violence, it was in the foul language category that this wrestling show is most noteworthy. Its per-hour cursing average was a remarkable 26.8; it was responsible for 17

percent (201/1170) of all the foul language in the '99 study period, and for 55 percent (201/364) of UPN's foul language. (Without *Smackdown!* UPN still would have finished first in this category, but with a per-hour average of 8.58.)

## **Examples of Foul Language**

### **1989**

"Miles, what the hell are you doing?" (*Murphy Brown*, CBS)

"I'm going to dance all over the island... and there's not a damn thing you can do about it."

(*Jake and the Fatman*, CBS)

"And you bastards want me to wear a wire?" (*Prime Target*, NBC movie)

"I can do the rat-a-tat-tat on your sorry ass." (*Booker*, Fox)

### **1999**

"Do you have any idea what it's like to give a two-hour summation with a pair of thong underwear crawling up your ass?" (*Family Law*, CBS)

"That little bitch takes the last shred of dignity I have." (*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, NBC)

"I think I don't want to wait around for that son of a bitch to strike again." (*Seven Days*, UPN)

"This is special agent Nathan Pimm."

"Special what? This special... bastard took a shot at me." (*The Strip*, UPN)

"I made your life a living hell. I made you screw those 22-year-olds." (*Once and Again*, ABC)

The Rock walks outside the ring, saying "bullshit" and "f\*\*k." The words are inaudible, but his lips are easily read. (*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

## Violence

The overall number of instances of violent material during prime time broadcast television was roughly the same in 1989 (1.49 instances per hour) and 1999 (1.27 instances per hour).

### Violence subcategories

Number of References	1989	1999
Violence used by Villains	81	18
Sexual Elements	6	15
Blood	35	42
Guns	130	69
Death/or Bodies Depicted	77	64
Sadism or Torture	5	9
Occult	-	17
Graphic	4	23

Much of the 1989 televised violence came in the form of gun battles on westerns like *Young Guns* (ABC) and cop and P.I. shows like *Hardball* (NBC). There were also two shows about Vietnam (*China Beach* on ABC, *Tour of Duty* on CBS) that bolstered violence numbers. Over the next decade, ABC dropped the most in violent content, and NBC and CBS dropped slightly, too.

The decline in their violent content was made up for by UPN, whose average of 3.13 instances of violence per hour is the highest network average ever recorded by the PTC. Most of their violent content is attributable to its World Wrestling Federation program, *WWF Smackdown!*, which airs at 8:00 p.m. and is viewed by around 1.5 million children ages 2-11 each week, and another 1.5 million teens under 18. *Smackdown!*'s high violence numbers are attained even given that wrestling moves and even punches in that program are not counted as instances of violence. Instead, only beatings with objects, blows to the groin, or worse are counted.

Material in the violence subcategories was low relative to other offensive content. For example, though the per-hour average of sex mixed with violence statistically doubled from the 1989 study period to 1999, there were only six instances of violence combined with sex in 1989 (allusions to rape; sexual suggestiveness combined with violent behavior), and 15 instances during the study period in 1999. Prime time gun violence actually dropped - though so did the distinction between heroes and villains using violence. Also, graphic depictions became more common, and occult violence, which did not appear in 1989, became a staple of teen-oriented shows like *Buffy the Vampire Slayer* and *Charmed*.

Again, as with the other categories, a violent depiction can be counted for more than one subcategory; for instance, a drive-by shooting by gangsters where the victims are shown being killed and blood spattering would appear under the categories of violence by villains, blood, and bodies/death.

## Examples of Violence

### 1989

A man is shot in the back. Blood spurts out of a hole in his chest. (*Wolf*, CBS)

Charlie grabs the female cop who doublecrossed him. He slaps her, hard, then slaps her again, knocking her to the floor. He then holds her head underwater in a sink. She struggles and gasps and coughs. (*Hardball*, NBC)

A Vietnamese soldier hits a sergeant in the head with a rifle. (*Tour of Duty*, CBS)

A criminal shoots a policeman in the shoulder. The policeman manages to empty his revolver into the criminal.  
(*Night Walk*, CBS movie)

A robber shoots a stagecoach passenger in the back with a rifle. (*The Young Riders*, ABC)

Two men chase another into a parking garage and shoot him. His body slams into a car. (*Alien Nation*, Fox)

In a long gunfight, several outlaws are shot. They are shown in slow motion, screaming and groaning in pain.  
(*Desperado: The Outlaw Years*, NBC movie)

Soldiers are shown throwing dead bodies onto a pile. Several bodies are shown lying along a river.  
(*China Beach*, ABC)

A group of men ambushes a man, beating him in the face and kicking him in the stomach and chest. They beat and kick him even after he loses consciousness. (*Paradise*, CBS)

### 1999

A female Serb refugee says in her homeland, she was "raped" every night for twenty-three days. Sometimes he was too drunk, so he did it with whatever was there. A wrench, a pistol, a broom handle." (*Law & Order: Special Victims Unit*, NBC)

One wrestler throws another into the wall several times. The second hits the first over the head with a metal pail, then in the neck with a metal pole. (*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

Sammo, while handcuffed to a man, takes on several thugs. He uses the man as a weapon, swinging him around and hitting the thugs with him. (*Martial Law*, CBS)

A cop tells his partner about how a previous partner, the current partner's father, was killed: "There was this loud bang from behind us... Your dad was laying right there, shot in the head." (*Third Watch*, NBC)

A soldier lies on the ground with blood on his uniform. His friend puts his hands over the wound to stanch the flow of blood, but as he presses down, blood spurts out and covers his hands. (*Harsh Realm*, Fox)

There is a shootout between assassins and policemen. Several officers are killed. A car containing a man and his wife and daughter is shot full of holes. (*Walker, Texas Ranger*, CBS)

A criminal shoots at Jesse and misses. Jesse punches him and rams his head into a few slot machines. (*The Strip*, UPN)

Buffy has a nightmare in which a demon writes in blood on her bare stomach using a long razorlike fingernail.  
(*Buffy the Vampire Slayer*, WB)

Faarooq picks up some steel stairs and throws them on top of Kane. Bradshaw throws Kane into the stairs. X-Pac hits Bradshaw in the head with a chair. (*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

## **Examples of Violence Perpetrated by Villains**

### **1989 - 81 references**

MacGyver and a journalist take off in a makeshift airplane. The Columbian drug-lord and his men shoot at them as they fly off. (*MacGuyver*, ABC)

### **1999 - 18 references**

A killer holds a girl hostage in a grocery store. He holds her by the ear and around the throat with a gun in her face. (*Nash Bridges*, CBS)

## **Examples of Sexual Violence**

### **1989 - 6 references**

A man shoots at a girl posing as a boy. She falls from her horse. One of the other riders attempts to help her, and takes her into a cabin. He lifts her shirt to look at the wound and realizes Lou is a girl. He says, "Don't you know what those men would've done to you if they'd realized you were a girl?" (*Young Riders*, ABC)

### **1999 - 15 references**

Jarrett, a male wrestler, throws Ivory, a female character, into a mud-wrestling ring. Miss Kitty, another female character, enters the ring, which is surrounded by shouting spectators, and attacks Ivory. They pull each other's hair, push and punch one another as they each attempt to pull the other's clothes off. During the match, Ivory pulls off Miss Kitty's bikini top. Though she is covered in mud and moves to try to cover herself, her breasts are visible. (*WWF Smackdown!*, UPN)

## **Examples of Bloody Violence**

**1989 - 35 references**

Payday shoots one of the cops. He is covered with blood seeping through his white dress shirt. He falls to the ground gasping for breath and writhing in pain. (*Paradise*, CBS)

**1999 - 42 references**

People are standing and sitting on a Tokyo subway train, including women, men, and a small boy. After some "eggs" filled with a lethal gas roll off a seat where they were left, people begin bleeding. A woman screams as more blood pours out of noses, eyes, and mouths. The train is then shown pulling to a stop at a station, its windows smeared with blood. A human arm is visible against the glass. (*Now and Again*, CBS)

**Examples of Violence with Guns****1989 - 130 references**

An American soldier is shown getting hit by a bullet. Gunfire is exchanged between American and Vietnamese soldiers. Grenades are shown going off, killing soldiers. A grenade goes off near one soldier's face, blinding him. He is then shot and killed. (*Tour of Duty*, CBS)

**1999 - 69 references**

Max takes his father's gun from Tony and points it at him. Chastity picks up the gun and shoots Max in the back. The bullet is shown coming out of Max's front in slow motion, preceded by a spatter of blood. Chastity runs in front of the still-moving bullet, and receives the bullet in her chest. There are blood stains on Max and Chastity. (*The X-Files*, Fox)

**Examples of Violence with Death or Bodies****1989 - 77 references**

A mobster shoots the assassin in the back of the head and puts his body in the trunk of the car. (*Wiseguy*, CBS)

**1999 - 64 references**

Eleanor comes home and sees Helen lying limp in the bathtub, apparently dead. George Fogelman appears. He tells Eleanor that Helen isn't dead, but that he stabbed Lindsay and beheaded another woman. (*The Practice*, ABC)

**Examples of Violence with Sadism/Torture****1989 - 5 references**

The Prince has one of his men torture Barney to get information from him. The torture device beams lasers into his eyes. (*Mission: Impossible*, ABC)

**1999 - 9 references**

A Klingon tries to brand B'Elanna's face with a red-hot piece of iron. He sticks it to her



face and it sizzles.  
(*Star Trek: Voyager*, UPN)

## **Examples of Violence with Graphic Imagery**

### **1989 - 4 references**

A wagon with what looks like an animal cage on it rides through the middle of town. Inside the cage are the bodies of several dead men. A bloodied hand is shown. (*Paradise*, CBS)

### **1999 - 23 references**

Several dead bodies are shown lying on the ground, either covered by blood-stained sheets, or lying in pools of blood. (*Ryan Caulfield*, Fox)

## **Examples of Occult Violence**

### **1989 - 0 references**

### **1999 - 17 references**

A woman is in bed with a nude man. She lies with her chest against his back and a creature comes out of her chest and burrows into the back of the man. When Angel finds them, the woman is bloody and dead with black eyes and the demon is inside the man. (*Angel*, WB)

## **IV. Conclusion**

The story of sex and foul language on prime time is one of repeated envelope-pushing. As indicated above, that process began sooner for sex than for language. Television's sexual revolution started in the 1970s, whereas it wasn't until the '90s that parents truly had to worry about their children being exposed to cursing as well.

Increasingly, series are designed for niche audiences. (The youth-crazed WB, in fact, is quite forthrightly a niche network, essentially unconcerned about viewers 35 and over.) There is little overlap between regular viewers of *Dawson's Creek* and regular viewers of *Law & Order*, nor do the shows themselves have much in common. Each, however, routinely contains one or more of the types of content dealt with in this study, rendering them unsuitable for the family audience.

And, of course, it is the family audience that winds up underserved. The problem is much less acute with 10 o'clock series like *Law & Order* than with 8 o'clock programs such as *Dawson's Creek*, which occupy time slots that ought to belong to shows all ages can watch.

It seems unlikely that the major networks will offer family series in high volume anytime soon. The success of *Friends* spawned many sex-driven sitcoms; the success of *Touched By an Angel* spawned few traditionally wholesome dramas. The ultimate obstacle for prime time family programming is that the genre has been neglected for so long that

fewer and fewer persons in the youth-obsessed and young-adult-populated television industry even understand it anymore.

- Research by Parents Television Council entertainment analysts Melissa Caldwell, Thomas Johnson, Aubree Rankin, and Daniel Weiss, and PTC Director of Operations Steven Schwalm.

## **V. PTC Policy Prescriptions**

Millions of Americans are tired of having nowhere to turn for intelligent and non-offensive entertainment. Hundreds of thousands have responded to the PTC's appeals to TV sponsors to stop the verbal "filth, sex and violence you send into our homes" via the television. Several things must happen to change television:

- 1) Companies must begin to understand and accept the serious responsibility that comes with funding the most widespread and powerful form of modern mass entertainment. This means that sponsors must consider content as well as ratings and demographics when making sponsoring decisions.
- 2) Companies that have already verbally claimed to have recognized this responsibility must act on that recognition, by refusing to sponsor the most profane, violent, or sexual shows on prime-time television. Otherwise, their profession of a desire for more options for "family friendly" viewing is hypocrisy.
- 3) Networks must consider the responsibility that comes with their privileged use of the broadcast spectrum.
- 4) The public needs to continue to organize, use information, and contact the networks and sponsors, letting them know that crass, degrading, sexual and violent material are not acceptable over the airwaves, and that we will use our powers as consumers, shareholders, and citizens to stop it.

## V. Statistical Tables

<b>1989</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Sex Ref. per hour</b>	<b>Foul Language per hour</b>	<b>Violence per hour</b>	<b>Total per hour</b>
ABC	56.5	128 / 2.27	40 / 0.71	87 / 1.54	255 / 4.51
CBS	59	40 / 0.68	98 / 1.66	94 / 1.59	232 / 3.93
Fox	15	7 / 0.46	9 / 0.60	18 / 1.20	34 / 2.26
NBC	<u>50</u>	<u>22 / 0.44</u>	<u>13 / 0.26</u>	<u>70 / 1.40</u>	<u>105 / 2.10</u>
	<b>180.5</b>	<b>197 / 1.09</b>	<b>160 / 0.89</b>	<b>269 / 1.49</b>	<b>626 / 3.47</b>
<b>1999</b>	<b>Hours</b>	<b>Sex Ref. per hour</b>	<b>Foul Language per hour</b>	<b>Violence per hour</b>	<b>Total per hour</b>
ABC	39	363 / 9.31	142 / 3.64	16 / 0.41	521 / 13.36
CBS	67.5	41 / 0.61	149 / 2.21	82 / 1.21	272 / 4.03
Fox	17	131 / 7.71	107 / 6.29	34 / 2.00	272 / 16.00
NBC	44.5	187 / 4.20	340 / 7.64	45 / 1.01	572 / 12.85
UPN	26.5	67 / 2.53	364 / 13.74	83 / 3.13	514 / 19.40
WB	<u>41</u>	<u>54 / 1.32</u>	<u>71 / 1.73</u>	<u>38 / 0.93</u>	<u>163 / 3.98</u>
	<b>235.5</b>	<b>843/3.58</b>	<b>1173/4.98</b>	<b>298/1.27</b>	<b>2314/9.83</b>

## ENDNOTES

- 1) Television Bureau of Advertising, Trends in Television, Executive Summary.
- 2) Television Bureau of Advertising, Multi-Set & Color Television Households, TV Basics,  
[www.tvb.org/tvfacts/tvbasics/basics2.htm](http://www.tvb.org/tvfacts/tvbasics/basics2.htm).
- 3) Television Bureau of Advertising, Trends in Television, Executive Summary.
- 4) NTI Annual Averages, from Television Bureau of Advertising, Time Spent Viewing - Persons, TV Basics.
- 5) Veronis, Suhler & Assoc., Wilkofsky Gruen Assoc., from Television Bureau of Advertising,  
Consumer Media Usage, TV Basics, [www.tvb.org/tvfacts/tvbasics/basics27.htm](http://www.tvb.org/tvfacts/tvbasics/basics27.htm).
- 6) David Grossman, "What the Surgeon General Found; As Early as 1972, the Link Was Clear Between  
Violent TV and Movies and Violent Youths," Los Angeles Times, October 21, 1999, Part B; Pg. 11.
- 7) See the PTC Special Report The Family Hour: Worse Than Ever and Headed for New Lows,  
August 31, 1999, p.2.
- 8) Claudia Puig, "Youths in Poll Say TV Is Harmful Influence," Los Angeles Times, February 27, 1995, Pg. 1.
- 9) Ibid.

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## **PROOF OF SERVICE**

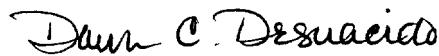
STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

I am over the age of 18 years, and not a party to this action. My business address is 4633 Marine Avenue, California 90260-1238. I have personal knowledge of the facts upon which I make this declaration, and if called upon to testify, under oath, I could and would competently testify thereto. On July 14, 2000, I served the following document: **PETITION FOR RULEMAKING** on the interested parties in this action, as follows:

**Secretary, Federal Communications Commission  
Washington, D.C. 20554**

- ☒ (service by mail) By placing a true copy thereof and enclosing in a sealed envelope, addressed as indicated on the attached service list, with postage thereon fully paid, and depositing in the U.S. Mail.
- ☐ (service by personal delivery) By placing a true copy thereof and enclosing in a sealed envelope, addressed as indicated on the attached service list, and personally delivering to the addressee. Proofs of service signed by the registered process server will be submitted to the Court.
- ☐ (service by fax) By transmitting from a facsimile transmission machine having the telephone number of (801) 469-3454 to the facsimile transmission machine having the telephone numbers as indicated on the attached service list, and listing the counsel of record's name on the facsimile transmission cover sheet. The above-described transmission was reported as complete without error by the facsimile transmission machine upon which the said transmission was made immediately following the transmission.

I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that the foregoing is true and correct. Executed this 14 day of July 2000, at Los Angeles, California.



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Dawn C. Desuacido